

REMARKS

The Applicant traverses the rejection.

In the Office Action mailed May 27, 2003, the Form PTO-326 (line "10") is marked to indicate that the drawings filed October 30, 1998, were objected to. The text of the Detailed Action does *not* state why the drawings filed on October 30, 1998 were objected to. The Applicant respectfully submits that the drawings objection was in error.

In the Office Action mailed December 30, 2002, the Form PTO-326 is marked to indicate that the drawings filed October 30, 1998 were accepted. In the Office Action mailed July 16, 2002, the Form PTO-326 is marked to indicate that the drawings filed October 30, 1998 were accepted. Indeed, in the Office Action mailed April 5, 2000, the Applicant's copy of Form PTO-948 is marked to show that the drawings filed October 30, 1998 were not objected to, i.e., they were accepted. Clarification of the drawing objection is requested. If the drawing objection was in error, a Notice of Allowance is requested forthwith for the reasons set forth below.

In the Office Action mailed May 27, 2003, (paper no. 29) claims 13-18 and 29 were allowed. Claims 1-3, 7, 9, 19, 23, 27, 28, 30-34, 38, and 40 were rejected. Claims 4-6, 8, 10-12, 20-22, 24-26, 35-37, 39, and 41-48 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but otherwise allowable.

Without admitting the rejection, but instead to expedite issuance of the patent, the rejected claims (1-3, 7-9, 19, 23, 27, 28, 30-34, 38 and 40) have been cancelled, without prejudice. The objected-to claims (4-6, 8, 10-12, 20-22, 24-26, 35-37, 39 and 41-48) have been amended to include all of the limitations of the base claims upon which they depended. Claims 4-6, 8, 10-12, 20-22, 24-26, 35-37, 39 and 41-48 and claims 13-18 and 29 are now in condition for allowance. The Applicant requests that a Notice of Allowance be issued forthwith.

Respectfully submitted,

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